



USAID | SOUTHERN AFRICA

Regional Acquisition and Assistance Office

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Closing Date: July 15, 2010
Closing Time: 1600hrs [Pretoria time]
Questions Due: June 25, 2010; 1600hrs [Pretoria time].

July 2, 2010

All interested applicants

**Subject: Amendment No. 1 - RFA 674-10-00045
Combination Prevention Program in Swaziland**

This Amendment No. 1 to the subject RFA is hereby issued to: 1) provide USAID's response to questions received from interested applicants; 2) provide the list of interested applicants; and 3) amend noted sections of the RFA.

All other terms and conditions of the original RFA remain unchanged.

Thank you for your consideration of this USAID initiative. We look forward to your participation in the competitive process.

Sincerely,

Martin R. Fischer
Regional Agreement Officer

I. Questions and Answers**Question 1.**

Page 1: Given the complexity of this project, this Offeror requests extending the submission deadline by two weeks.

Answer 1.

Unfortunately this will not be possible because there is a very tight deadline to complete this RFA process so that the award can be made before the end of the fiscal year to allow for the new award to start as soon as possible so that services are not interrupted.

Question 2.

Page 8: Third paragraph states "To fully realize the combination approach...will require a careful balance of these three pillars of interventions. Please clarify if equal emphasis should be placed on each pillar, for budgeting purposes, or if one of the pillars should be given more emphasis than the others.

Answer 2.

As stated in the RFA, male circumcision will receive more funding than the other program areas, but it does not mean that any one pillar is more 'important' than any other. This should be taken into consideration in the preparation of cost application by interested applicants. Year one budget calculations are projected to be \$652,900 in Abstinence & Be Faithful, \$207,084 in Other Prevention, and \$2,355,698 in Male Circumcision.

Question 3.

Page 9 of the RFA states that the biomedical pillar of the program should "focus on the long term scale up of MC services, but do so within the current context of a proposed accelerated scale up initiative." Could USAID provide Applicants with further information on the scope of the accelerated scale up, particularly the number of circumcisions that will be funded under the accelerated scale up program, and the timeframe for the accelerated scale up (i.e., approximate start and end dates).

Answer 3.

Swaziland has recently decided to accelerate the roll out of its adult male circumcision program. A formal detailed action plan of how this will be implemented is still under development by the Ministry of Health. USAID expects that the recipient of this new Combination Prevention Program award will align its male circumcision funding and workplan to support the accelerated plan once it is endorsed by the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland (GKOS).

Question 4.

Page 9: Sub-section 3, bullet i states "Support and place key MC focal persons at the MOH, NERCHA, and other GKO entities as needed." Please clarify if this award will support covering salaries of MC focal persons as needed.

Answer 4. Yes, that would be an allowable cost under this award.

Question 5.

Page 9: Sub-section 3, bullet h states "Support and place said HCWs as needed." Please clarify if this award will support covering salaries of HCWs as needed.

Answer 5. Yes, that would be an allowable cost under this award.

Question 6.

Page 9: Sub-section 3, bullet k states "Support the development of operations and impact focused research ... carried out under the guidance of the MC Task Force Research Sub-Committee." Please clarify if this award is intended to provide financial support for this research.

Answer 6.

This award may be used to support research related activities if the applicant determines that this is part of the most effective technical approach, but it is not a requirement for consideration that research be included in the application.

Question 7.

Page 9: Sub-section 3, bullet l states "Procure necessary equipment and carry out trainings of public sector health care providers." Please clarify if USAID has a national partner that they would prefer the awardee coordinate procurement of MC equipment and supplies with.

Answer 7.

USAID does not have a set national partner for MC trainings, although beginning this year MC supplies will, whenever possible, be purchased through global supply chain systems.

Question 8.

Should Applicant's budget for condom commodities or consumables and equipment necessary for male circumcision, such as male circumcision kits? Or will these commodities and equipment be provided under another funding mechanism?

Answer 8.

Condom commodities and MC kits do not need to be budgeted for under year one of this award, but in future years this may become a necessary expense. National Distribution of condoms from 2009(including social marketed condoms) was 9,215,077 (male and female). UNFPA and MOH take the lead in condom procurement for Swaziland. There is no set, required or agreed upon number of condoms that USG is expected to support at the current time although it is not a given that this will not change in the future. For budgeting purposes, applicants should take into account the anticipated demand for condoms and their cost. Regarding MC kits, after the first year of the award it is expected that approximately 2500 boys will age into the cohort for adult MC and will need MC kits to support their circumcision. As the neonatal MC program ramps up, the awardee should also be able to support approximately 2500 neonatal MCs per year with the appropriate supplies.

Question 9.

Page 12: Under sub-section the last bullet of the substantial involvement paragraph reads "Concurrence in excess of \$100,000; and" Can you please provide the missing text.

Answer 9.

There is no missing information. In the amendment section below, "and" will be deleted.

Question 10.

Page 17: Can USAID indicate a requirement that local partners/organizations should be proposed on a non-exclusive basis only?

Answer 10.

USAID has no basis to express an opinion on any legal agreements between private entities.

Question 11.

Page 15 of the RFA states that the page limit for the technical application is 30 pages. Could you please confirm whether this page limit includes the two-page program abstract?

Answer 11.

As stated in the Technical Application Format section, the overall page limitation for the technical application is 30 pages excluding the annex and items such as the cover page, dividers and the table of contents. Applicants may use their own discretion to fulfill this requirement taking into consideration that the abstract shall be a two-page summary and the maximum number of pages of the Technical application body is 30 pages.

Question 12.

Can USAID confirm that the two-page Program Abstract/Executive Summary is not included in 30-page limitation?

Answer 12.

See Answer 11.

Question 13.

Page 15 of the RFA instructs that proposals shall be typed with "12 characters per inch." As "characters per inch" is not a word processing size, please clarify if the use of 11 point font will be acceptable for submitted proposals.

Answer 13.

Yes. Please see Section II of this amendment.

Question 14.

Does USAID require that key personnel have 100% level of effort on this project? If an Applicant proposes a Chief of Party or other key personnel for less than 100% with cost

share covering oversight of similar objectives for the remainder of their time, would this be considered non responsive?

Answer 14.

It would not be considered non-responsive; however, it could impact the evaluation of the application in several areas.

Question 15.

Please confirm that the key personnel must include Chief of Party, Program Officer, Technical Officer, and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist.

Answer 15.

The required key personnel positions are Chief of Party, Program Officer, Technical Officer and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist.

Question 16.

On page 18 the requirements indicate that "Key Personnel for this Cooperative agreement must include the Chief of Party (COP), Program Officer, Technical Officer and the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist.". On page 19, after the description of the COP, the language is that "Applicants has the discretion to determine the proper number and mix of additional key personnel, short-term technical staff, and others to meet award requirements." Please confirm if the COP is the only required key staff or if the Program Officer, Technical Officer, and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist are also required key staff. If the latter is the case, please provide descriptions of the requirements for these positions as you have done for the COP.

Answer 16.

The Program Officer, Technical Officer, and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist are also required key staff. No description of the additional staff positions will be given. Descriptive sentences about the COP were given because that is the proposed position that will be ranked in the scoring of applicants, while the other positions will not be scored.

Question 17.

Page 18: Second paragraph states "Regional candidates (third-country nationals) should also be considered for appropriate staff positions." Can ex-pats also be considered for key staff positions if local staff with the relevant technical capabilities are not available in Swaziland?

Answer 17. Yes.

Question 18.

Page 18: EO 13317 requires that an applicant's use of highly skilled US volunteers be an evaluation factor in the selection of applications for assistance activities to be implemented abroad under (a.o.) PEPFAR. In the RFA it states the use of highly skilled volunteers is required according to ADS 303.3.6.3(d); We do not believe that latter statement to be true. Please confirm.

Answer 18.

Noted. According to ADS 303.3.6.3(d), EO 13317 requires the applicant's use of highly skilled U.S. volunteers be an evaluation factor in the selection of applications for assistance activities. By implication, all items included as evaluation factors are required from applicants so that they are evaluated on the same basis. Please see Section II of this amendment which clarifies this issue further.

Question 19.

Page 21 of the RFA notes that "passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations" should be included under "other direct costs". Is it acceptable for Applicants to include these items under the Travel and Transportation line item if this represents the Applicant's standard budgeting practice?

Answer 19.

No. Applicants shall include the items listed in the question under the other direct costs for consistent evaluation.

Question 20.

Page 22: Are NICRAs required of both the prime applicant and sub recipients in the cost application?

Answer 20.

Yes. If the applicant decides to engage sub recipients, the cost application shall include detailed budget breakdown of the sub award within the main budget, which includes indirect costs and the subawardee's NICRA, if any.

Question 21.

Page 21 of the RFA states "Applicants should assume notification of an award approximately forty-five (60) days after the date established as a deadline for receipt of applications." Please clarify if applicants should assume notification of an award approximately 45 or 60 days after the date established as a deadline for receipt of applications.

Answer 21.

60 days. Please see Section II of the RFA.

Question 22.

Page 24 of the RFA states that email submission must be compatible with MS WORD and Excel environment. Could you confirm whether pdf documents are acceptable? We understand that the budget itself must be in Excel. Also, given the relatively small file size allowed (2MB per email) are zipped files acceptable?

Answer 22.

Please see Section II of this amendment to the RFA.

Question 23.

Would USAID allow e-mail submission by the due date and time, with hard copy to follow within 5 days?

Answer 23.

Please see Section II of this amendment.

Question 24.

If email applications are submitted by the deadline, must hard copies also arrive by the closing date of 15 July 2010?

Answer 24.

Please see Section II of this amendment.

Question 25.

The RFA indicates that hard copy submission is required. Since the preferred method of submission is electronically, via email, we assume that USAID will accept hard copy delivery postmarked no later than the due date. Is this assumption correct?

Answer 25.

Please see Section II of this amendment.

Question 26.

The RFA indicates that hard copy submission is required. Since the preferred method of submission is electronically, via email, we assume that USAID will accept hard copy delivery postmarked no later than the due date. Is this assumption correct? Specifically, if an electronic submission is made by the due date, is it permissible to have the follow-up hard copies postmarked by the due date, or do they need to have arrived in Pretoria by the submission deadline?

Answer 26.

Please see Section II of this amendment.

Question 27.

Please confirm that Adobe PDF files acceptable for the electronic submissions of the technical proposal and signature pages within the cost application.

Answer 27.

Please see Section II of this amendment.

Question 28.

Can USAID please confirm that Certifications and Assurances are required of both the prime applicant and subrecipients?

Answer 28.

Yes

Question 29.

We understand that it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments such as this RFA and as such Prime Applicants are not permitted to include in their budget a profit or fee. Are for-profit sub-recipients participating in a consortium permitted to include a profit in their sub-recipient budget?

Answer 29.

Profit is not allowed under assistance agreements, including at the sub-recipient level. Profit may be allowed under subcontracts for program implementation services under some circumstances. Applicants are free to propose profit under any subcontracts; however the applicants should address this issue in their budget notes.

Question 30.

Can I download these from the forms section of the USAID Web site (<http://www.usaid.gov/forms/>)? I just want to make sure we don't download some generic forms and then find out that a version of the forms specific to this grant were required.

Answer 30.

As stated in the RFA Attachments section, you will find the required forms at http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aapproved_standard_forms.jsp.

II. List of Interested Applicants

1. African Christian College
Swaziland
USA phone until July 20 is 512-241-0533
Swaziland phone until Christmas is 011-268-550-6036
E-mail: irahill@sbcglobal.net
2. EngenderHealth
212-993-9831
E-mail: PPerchal@engenderhealth.org
www.engenderhealth.org
3. Futures Group International
One Thomas Circle NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 775-9680
Direct Line: (202) 777-0938
Fax: (202) 775-9694
www.futuresgroup.com
4. Population Services International, Inc.
1120 19th Street, NW Suite 600
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202 785 0072; Fax: 202 785 0120
www.psi.org
5. Right to Care — *Treating AIDS Seriously*
The Atrium, 41 Stanley Ave, Braamfontein Werf, Johannesburg
Tel: 011 710-7000 | Direct: 011 710-7141 | Mobile: 083 461-4130 |
Email: bruce.conradie@righttocare.org
6. University Research Co., LLC/Center for Human Services
7200 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 600
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
301-941-8613 (tel); 301-941-8650 (fax)
smariam@urc-chs.com
www.urc-chs.com

III. Amendment

The following sections of the RFA are hereby amended as follows:

1. Section IV.4.A. Technical Application Format, second paragraph, delete "12 characters per inch" in its entirety and replace with "12 point font."
2. Section IV.4.B.2. delete the second paragraph and replace with the following in lieu thereof:
"Applicants should assume notification of an award approximately sixty (60) days after the date established as a deadline for receipt of application."
3. Section IV.4.A(b), second paragraph(Page 18), delete the last two sentences in their entirety and replace with the following:
"The use of highly skilled U.S. volunteers must be addressed in this section, including the level of effort, the specific roles that U.S. volunteers can play and any constraints affecting the use of U.S. volunteers. The staffing plan shall elaborate what and how long-term and short term technical and management assistance will be provided to the program to accomplish tasks and objectives."
4. Section IV.7 General Instructions (Page 24) , delete the second paragraph in its entirety and replace the following in lieu thereof:
"The preferred delivery method is electronically via e-mail to applications@usaid.gov with up to 10 attachments (5MB limit) per email compatible with Microsoft Office 2003 compatible (MS WORD or Excel) in a MS Windows environment. Multiple emails may be sent to accommodate the application size and content, but each must contain very clear identification of the attachment and instructions for assembling the application. Applicants may also send an Adobe Acrobat portable document format (.pdf) for electronic submission; however, zipped files attachments are not allowed. The subject line for every such email must include the following: "Combination Prevention Program." Applicants shall provide 2 (two) hard copies of the original technical application and 2(two) copies of the cost application to the following address, with the goal that these hard copies will be received within one week of the closing date for receipt of application if the application is submitted electronically. Please note that lateness of the applications will be determined by the submission of the electronic submission, not the submission of hard copies."
5. Section V.1.A.b. Management and Staffing, delete consideration e. in its entirety and replace with the following:
"e. The extent to which the management and staffing plan demonstrates the use of highly skilled U.S. volunteers including the level of effort, the specific roles that U.S. volunteers can play and any constraints affecting the use of U.S. volunteers [ADS 303; Executive Order 13317 - Volunteers for Prosperity]."
6. Section II.3. Type of Award(Page 12), delete the last substantial involvement paragraph and replace with the following in lieu thereof:
"Concurrence on the substantive provisions of subawards. Review and approval of proposed subawards in excess of \$100,000."

All other terms and conditions of the original RFA remain unchanged.

[END OF AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO RFA 674-10-00045]

